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A nurse's life must necessarily be a quiet one. There are very few amusements or pleasure trips, but there is an occasional church entertainment and picnic, though it is usually the nurse's misfortune to be busy at such a time. But such a lonely place has its compensations, the climate is healthful, the winters are cold but pleasant, and the scenery during the summer months is beautiful, and no matter in what place or under what circumstances, it is well to be content.

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## THE WORLD'S WAR AGAINST CONSUMPTION

COMPILED BY L. L. DOCK

(Continued from page 610)

SOME months after Dr. Knopf's criticism upon the non-existence of an American society against tuberculosis steps were taken to form a committee to war against this disease, which may and undoubtedly will become a national committee, having been organized under the auspices of the Charity Organization Society of New York, a society justly famed for its notable constructive work in reformations of a social and hygienic character. We quote the following from the "Annual Report:" "... The appointment of the Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis, consisting of sixteen representative physicians and sixteen others who are especially interested in the social aspect of the disease. In many respects the methods of work adopted by the new committee will be similar to those which were employed in the case of the Tenement-House Committee. Like the former committee, this one will be representative in character. For example, both Dr. Ernst J. Lederle, Commissioner of Health, and Dr. Hermann M. Biggs, medical officer of the Health Department; Mr. Homer Folks, Commissioner of Public Charities, and Mr. Robert W. de Forest, president of the Charity Organization Society and Commissioner of the Tenement-House Department, are members of the committee.\* Coöperation will be sought not only with charitable agencies of all kinds, but with city departments and State officials. Attention will be devoted to educational propaganda, and the support of the public press will be especially sought.

"The services of a competent secretary, a district nurse, and a statistician who will devote their entire time to the committee have been

\* A nurse is also a member of this committee, Miss L. D. Wald, of the Nurses' Settlement, New York.—Ed.

secured, and at the same time, in so far as it will be of advantage, the entire volunteer body of workers and the expert agents and visitors of the society will contribute to the objects which it is desired to accomplish.

"The first task will be an exhaustive investigation of some of the social aspects of tuberculosis. There are already in progress in many laboratories investigations of a bacteriological character; and in the hospitals and sanatoria there is opportunity for clinical study and investigation into the physical aspects of the disease. Little attempt, however, has been made to establish the relation, for example, between infected living apartments and the victims of the disease, or into the possibility of recovery or improvement resulting from improved diet and improved light and air when patients are treated in their own homes; nor has there been any systematic effort to ascertain how far infection can be prevented by instruction in the nature of the disease and in the character of the precautions which should be taken to prevent its spread. In several foreign countries and in some parts of the United States, as well as in Canada, there have been organized societies for the prevention of tuberculosis, their chief functions being the dissemination of leaflets and of information in other forms concerning the communicability of the disease, the disinfecting of apartments where deaths occurred, and the necessity of conscientious care on the part of consumptives, especially as to the danger of spitting in hallways, public conveyances, or on the street. Educational and practical work of this kind is of the utmost importance, and the committee will undertake to carry on such work on a large scale at the same time that its investigations are in progress.

"In coöperation with relief agencies it is hoped that much additional information may be obtained concerning the desirability of making an entire change in the physical environment of those who are suffering from the disease, even when this involves considerable financial outlay. The financial burden imposed by the existence of twenty thousand consumptives in New York City is enormous, and on the financial side alone, therefore, it may be found a good investment to cure tuberculosis in its incipient stages, rather than to allow almost the entire number, as at present, to become a burden either upon their immediate family or upon the public in the last stages of the disease.

"The committee wish especially to emphasize the fact that this movement is not in any sense one against consumptives, nor one that will be permitted in any way to increase the already great hardships of their lot. In some quarters there is a tendency to exaggerate the danger of casual contact with tuberculous patients. It is believed that there is no occasion for any panic or public apprehension from the existence in a community of consumptive patients provided a reasonable degree of

prudence is exercised. Complete isolation of all consumptives would be an utterly impracticable proposition. Undue restraint upon the liberty of patients in moving from one place to another, or any such general dread of the disease as will make it more difficult for those who have had tuberculosis but have been cured, or for those who are improving and are conscientious in caring for their own sputum, thus preventing the infection of others, to find employment, is to be deprecated. The ruling of the immigration authorities that all consumptives would be excluded on the ground that their disease is dangerously contagious is an instance of action of this kind. Only six intending immigrants were, however, excluded under this ruling between January 1, 1902, and August 31, 1902, obviously much less than the number arriving. The total number of persons returned to foreign countries in this period who were afflicted by tuberculosis was twenty-six, but twenty were brought to the Commissioner from various places for deportation under the one-year clause, *i.e.*, because they had become public dependents within one year of their arrival. A systematic attempt to spread accurate information concerning what is definitely known about the disease will be of benefit to individual consumptives, and will eventually, it is hoped, contribute to the lessening of the present high death-rate from the disease.

"The present committee is not the first attempt that has been made to perfect an organization of this kind, and one of the most hopeful things in connection with its formation is that the earlier attempts in the same direction are merged into it. Last winter, largely upon the initiative of Dr. S. A. Knopf, a call was circulated for a meeting to form a society for the purpose of fighting tuberculosis. Many of those who have now become members of the new committee signed this call. Owing to the difficulty of finding a layman with the proper qualifications for the position of president of the society, the formation of the society was not consummated and the physicians who have been interested in the matter have cordially endorsed the present plan, by which the executive and clerical work of the committee will be attended to in the offices of the Charity Organization Society, while the scientific and professional guidance required will be supplied by those who are competent to give it.

"Aside from the investigation above described in the social aspects of tuberculosis, the objects of the committee have been formulated in part as follows:

"(1) The promulgation of the doctrine that tuberculosis is a communicable, preventable, and curable disease.

"(2) The dissemination of knowledge concerning the means and methods to be adopted for the prevention of tuberculosis.

"(3) The advancement of movements to provide special hospitals,

sanatorium and dispensary facilities for consumptive adults and scrofulous and tuberculous children among the poor.

"(4) The initiation and encouragement of measures which tend to prevent the development of scrofulous and other forms of tubercular diseases."—*Twentieth Annual Report, Charity Organization Society, New York.*

A still later article in *Charities*, called "Knows no Geography," gives a résumé of the most important and latest developments in this country in the war against tuberculosis, which we quote in full:

"There are striking evidences of the vigor with which the warfare against tuberculosis is being instigated throughout this country. There is at present no other disease which is receiving so much attention at the hands of social and philanthropic workers. One reason may be that its cause is so well defined and the methods whereby its spread can be prevented are so simple that they may be easily grasped by the public. There is reason to believe that within a comparatively short time the United States will have as complete an organization for the prevention of tuberculosis as any to be found in Europe.

"At present various cities and organizations are working on independent lines, and there is no affiliation between them in this work other than that of a common interest. A mere capitulation will perhaps show the scope of the movement.

"Pennsylvania has a Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, which was incorporated in 1895, and its work is along general lines. It has issued an instructive series of 'tracts,' and also seeks to encourage the erection of State and municipal hospitals. In New York City the Charity Organization Society has a Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis which has also undertaken an extensive educational work. About seventy lectures have thus far been definitely arranged for; dates and places for others are daily being determined. Pamphlets on the subject of 'The Prevention of Consumption' have been issued. Ten thousand of one of these are being distributed among the business offices and public libraries of the city; ten thousand of another are to be distributed among school-teachers, and a third pamphlet is to be distributed in large numbers (about forty thousand) among factories and workshops. The committee is also taking steps looking towards the erection of a sanatorium outside but close to the city, and in other ways it is exerting its influence as a coördinating body. At the same time, a sub-committee on treatment has ninety-eight cases of indigent consumptives under its care, although this work of relief began only in September.